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Message Text

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46
ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 CU-02 SAM-01 SAB-01 SCCT-01 AID-05

EUR-12 NIC-01 /093 W
---------- 052145
R 271445Z JAN 75
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1705
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY SANAA
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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E.O. 11752: NA
TAGS: PINR, PFOR, EG
SUBJECT: EXECUTION OF SOMALI SHAIKHS

REF: A. MOGADISCIO 107; B. 122; C. 128

1. CAIRO MEDIA REPORT GSDR HAS EXECUTED TEN "PERSONS" FOR OPPOSITION TO DECREE ACCORDING WOMEN EQUAL RIGHTS; THESE TEN INDIVIDUALS HAD REPORTEDLY EXPLOITED CONSERVATIVE EMOTIONS TO PROMOTE NATIONAL DIVISION. NOT A HINT HAS BEEN GIVEN IN CAIRO MEDIA THAT TEN INDIVIDUALS WERE RELIGIOUS SHAIKHS OR THAT, AS RECORDED REFTEL A, SOME EGYPTIAN SHAIKHS MAY HAVE BEEN DECLARED PERSONA NON GRATA.

2. WE BELIEVE IT LIKELY THAT GOE, CONTRARY TO CURRENT PRACTICE OF SELF-CENSORSHIP WITHIN MEDIA, MAY HAVE ISSUED GUIDELINES
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TO LOCAL PRESS REGARDING RELIGIOUS OPPOSITION TO LIBERALIZATION

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LAWS IN SOMALIA. EGYPTIAN ESTABLISHMENT IS PROUD OF THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF EGYPTIAN WOMEN, MANY OF WHOM HOLD RESPONSIBLE POSITIONS IN UNIVERSITIES, THE PROFESSIONS, BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENT. THE CAPABLE MINISTER OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS, FOR EXAMPLE, IS A WOMAN. SOPHISTICATED EGYPTIANS WOULD THEREFORE TEND TO VIEW RELIGIOUS OPPOSITION TO NEW GSDR LAW AS SHAMEFUL BACKWARDNESS.

3. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THERE ARE HREE REASONS WHY GOE WILL DOWNPLAY CURRENT SOMALI EVENTS:

A) "ARAB" SOMALI. AS AN ARAB LEAGUE MEMBER ON GOOD TERMS WITH EGYPT, GOE WILL PREFER NOT TO STIR UP TROUBLE BY GRATUITOUS MORAL JUDGMENTS.

B) ERITREA. GOE CONTINUES WALK TIGHT ROPE ON MAINTAINING GOOD RELATIONS WITH BOTH ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA AND WILL WISH STAY OUT OF INTERNAL SQUABBLES IN EITHER COUNTRY.

C) AZHAR POLITICS. GOE HAS JUST SQUEAKED THROUGH WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN NASTY RELIGIOUS INCIDENT, AND WILL WISH NOT TO REVIVE BROAD INTEREST IN SOCIO-RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS. CURRENT SHAIKH AL-AZHAR, A SUFI, SOME WEEKS AGO EMERGED FROM HIS USUAL OTHER WORLDLY CONTEMPLATION OF SUFI THEORY TO OBJECT PUBLICLY AND VOCIFEROUSLY TO A NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL COMPLAINING ABOUT DIN CREATED BY MOSQUE LOUDSPEAKES IN CAIRO. AT SAME TIME, HE WAS ENGAGED IN ADMINISTRATIVE TUSSLE FOR POWER WITH DEP PRIMIN RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS ON SUCH MATTERS AS SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS. SHAIKH, FOLLOWING HIS PUBLIC PROTEST, WENT HOME AND STAYED THERE. SMALL STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS PROTESTING SOCIAL LIBERALISM BEGAN AT AZHAR. WE UNDERSTAND THAT SADAT, HIMSLEF ORF SUFI INCLINATION, INTERVENED, AND SHAIKH AL-AZHAR IS NOW BACK AT HIS POST WITH ALL HIS DEMANDS MET.

4. IN SHORT, GOE, WHOSE PROGRESSIVE IMAGE IS CONTINUOUS TARGET OF INTERNAL, LIBYAN, AND IRAQI PROVOCATEURS, IS ACUTELY AWARE THAT BELOW THE LEVEL OF THE EDUATED MINORITY, FUNDAMEN-TALIST ISLAM SEETHES.
EILTS

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